

A NEW BABYLONIAN ACCOUNT OF THE CREATION OF MAN.

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The Babylonians were particularly fond of stories of the creation, of the world and the beginnings of civilization. The best known of these is the "Epic of Creation" in seven tablets or cantos, parts of which were discovered by George Smith in the British Museum more than forty years ago. Still another was found in 1882 at Abu Habba by Rassam and brought to the British Museum. It was later published by Dr. Pinches. The same museum contains fragments of a third story of the creation which was written in Assyria.

The University Museum in Philadelphia is particularly rich in texts of this kind. In 1914 Dr. Poebel published one which combined accounts of the creation and the flood,¹ in 1915 Dr. Langdon published one which contains a most interesting account of the beginnings of agriculture,² and to these the writer is now able to add another that he came upon among some uncatalogued tablets some months ago.³ This last text was excavated at Nippur and is one of the many tablets that lay unpacked for years in the basement of the Museum. As the subjoined translation will show, the text deals with the creation of man, the origin of Babylonian pastoral life and the exigencies which led to the construction of cities. Some of its phrases remind us of expressions in the early chapters of the Book of Genesis. The text is as follows:

1. The mountain of heaven and earth
2. The assembly of heaven, the great gods, entered. Afterwards
3. Because Ashnan⁴ had not come forth, they conversed together.

¹ A. Poebel, "Historical Texts," Philadelphia, 1914, 9 ff., also G. A. Barton, "Archæology and the Bible," Philadelphia, 1916, 278-282.

² S. Langdon, "Sumerian Epic of Paradise, the Flood, and the Fall of Man," Philadelphia, 1915; also Barton, *op. cit.*, 283-289.

³ The tablet has since been catalogued as No. 14005.

4. The land Tikku⁵ had not created;
5. For Tikku a temple platform had not been filled in;
6. A lofty dwelling had not been built.
7. The arable land was without any seed;
8. A well or a canal(?) had not been dug;
9. Horses and cattle had not been brought forth,
10. So that Ashnan could shepherd a corral;
11. The Anunua, the great gods, had made no plan;
12. There was no *šes*-grain of thirty fold;
13. There was no *šes*-grain of fifty fold;
14. Small grain, mountain grain, and great *asal*-grain there was not;
15. A possession and house there was not;
16. Tikku had neither entered a gate nor gone out;
17. Together with Nintu,—the lord had not brought forth men.
18. The god Ug as leader came; as leader he came forth to plan;
19. Mankind he planned; many men were brought forth.
20. Food and sleep he planned for them;
21. Clothing and dwellings he did not plan for them.
22. The people with rushes and rope came,
23. By making a dwelling a kindred was formed.
24. To the gardens . . . they brought irrigation;
25. On that day their [gardens sprouted(?)].
26. Trees . . . mountain and country. . . .

1. *gar-sag-an-ki-bi-da-ge*
2. *erim-an-ni dingir-dingir a-nun-na im-tur-ne-eš a-ba*
3. *mu^dezinu nu-in-da-ma-da ub-še-da-an-dug-ga*
4. *kalam-mu^dtik-ku nu-in-da-an-dim-ma-aš*
5. *^dtik-ku-ra temen nu-mu-na-sig-ga-aš*
6. *tuš-up-pi-a ra⁶-ub-šar-ra*
7. *ar-nu-me-a-am numun šar-ra*
8. *pu-e-x⁷-a-bi nu-in-tu-ud*
9. *anše-ra⁸ bir-eš-bi nu-in-tu-ud*
10. *mu^dezinu utul-umuna-bi apin*
11. *^da-nun-na dingir gal-gal e-ne nu-mu-un-zu-ta-am*
12. *še-šes erim-ušu-am nu-gál-la-am*
13. *še-šes erim-eninnu-am nu-gál-la-am*
14. *še-tur-tur še-kur-ra še-à-sal-gal-la nu-gál-la-am*
15. *šu-gar tuš-tuš-bi nu-gál-la-am*
16. *^dtik-ku nu-še-tur ka nu-il*

⁴ A god of vegetation; Brunnow's "List," 7484.

⁵ Tikku is a river-bank personified.

⁶ *ra = la*, "not"; cf. "Origin of Babylonian Writing," 287. It is often employed in the Stele of Vultures in this sense; see, *e. g.*, Col. XXI., 2, 3, *na-ru-a-bi ba-ra-ad-du*, "this stele one shall not break."

⁷ The sign *x* is 606 in the "Origin of Babylonian Writing." Its values are undetermined.

⁸ *anše-ra*, for *anše-kur-ra*. *kur* was omitted by the scribe.

17. *en* ^a*nin-tu en kal-kal nu-in-tu-ud*
 18. ^a*ug*^o *maš tum-ma maš dū-da ê*
 19. *nam-lu un-zu erim-nun-a ga-e-ne*
 20. *gar-kù-šà-bi nu-un-zu-uš-am*
 21. *tug-gi-tuš-tuš-bi nu-mu-un-zu-uš-am*
 22. *uku giš gi-a-na-dur-bi mu-ê*
 23. *tuš-gim-ka ba-ni-in-ib ušbar*
 24. *a-šar-šar-ra . . . im-gù-gù-ne*
 25. *ud-ba-ki dar- . . . r]a-e-n[e . . .*
 26. *giš-bi dul . . . bi-kur-gar . . .*
 27. *gub? . . . dul? . . . bi . . .*
 28. *nu*

REVERSE.

1. Father Enlil(?)
 2. standing grain(?)
 3. for mankind
 4. creation of Entu
 5. Father Enlil
 6. Duazagga, the way of the gods
 7. Duazagga, the brilliant, for my god I guard(?)
 8. Entu and Enlil to Duazagga.
 9. A dwelling for Ashnan from out of Duazagga I will [make(?) for thee].
 10. Two thirds of the fold perished(?);
 11. His plants for food he created for them;
 12. Ashnan rained on the field for them;
 13. The moist(?) wind and the fiery storm-cloud he created for them.
 14. Two thirds of the fold stood;
 15. For the shepherd of the fold joy was disturbed.
 16. The house of rushes did not stand;
 17. From Duazagga joy departed.
 18. From his dwelling, a lofty height, his boat
 19. Descended; from heaven he came
 20. To the dwelling of Ashnan; the scepter he brought forth to them;
 21. His brilliant city he raised up, he appointed for them;
 22. The reed-country he planted; he appointed for them;
 23. The falling rain the hollows caught for them;
 24. A dwelling-place was their land; food made men multiply;
 25. Prosperity entered the land; it caused them to become a multitude.
 26. He brought to the hand of man the scepter of command.
 27. The lord caused them to be and they came into existence.
 28. Companions calling them, with a man his wife he made them dwell.
 29. At night¹⁴ as fitting companions they are together.
 30. (Sixty lines).

1. *a-a* ^a*en-lil*.

2. *nà-si-a*.

^o In Semitic, Shamash, the sun-god.

3. *nam-lù-ge*.
4. *ba en-tu-ge*.
5. *a-a^den-lil*.
6. *du-azag-ga šid-da dingir*.
7. *du-azag-ga laġ-ga-a dingir-ma-da-ra ab-u[ru]*.
8. *^den-tu ^den-lil-bi du-azag-ga-ra ne*.
9. *du ^dezinu-bi du-azag-ta im-ma-da-r[a-rú]*.
10. *šanabi-e amaš-a im-ma-ab-gab-*.
11. *u-bi e-gar-ra-ra mu-un-a-ba-e-ne*
12. *^dezinu gan-e mu-un-imi-am-ne*
13. *lil-ap in uraš-lag-bi mu-un-a-ba-e-ne*
14. *šanabi amaš-a-na gub-ba-ni*
15. *sib-amaš-a ġi-li dú-dú-a*
16. *gi-li-eš nam-na-gub-ba-ni*
17. *du-el'-azag-ga¹⁰ ġi-li-il sub-am*
18. *ga-ni-ta sag-gi-il mà-ni*
19. *ib-gál an-na-ta tum-tum-a-ne*
20. *dù ^dezinu-bi ġat-tu ši-še-e-eš*
21. *uru-azag-na ib-gál mu-da-an-gál-li-eš*
22. *kalam-ma-gi-šag¹¹-gál mu-gub an-gál-li-eš*
23. *šeq-eš e-ka-sig im-sá-sá-e-ne*
24. *gišgal-ma kalam-ma-ne gar mu-ni-ab-rug-rug kal-mê*
25. *x¹² kalam-ma ne-gig mu-un-ne-gál meš*
26. *ab-a-tum-ra da-ki uš-ir a-ġat-mê*
27. *u-mu-un mu-ne-eš-ib-gál mu-da-an-gál-li-eš*
28. *man-na gu-ne za¹³-ki dam-ne ne-ba-an-gub-eš-a*
29. *gig-bi-ir¹⁴ bar-a-gar dag-me-eš*
30. *lx šu-šú lx*.

The tablet on which this text is written is five inches long and 2 and $\frac{5}{8}$ inches wide. The script is of the mixed cursive variety that was often employed in the time of the first dynasty of Babylon (2210–1924 B. C.) and the Cassite dynasty (1775–1150 B. C.). It is impossible from the palæography to date the tablet definitely. It is certainly older than 1200 B. C. and may have been written before the year 2000 B. C.

¹⁰ *du-el-azag-ga* is doubtless a variant spelling of *du-azag-ga*. The sign *el* introduces an additional word for brightness, thus emphasizing *azag*.

¹¹ *kalam-ma-gi-šag-gal*, literally, "the land reeds are in the midst," a very appropriate name for Babylonia.

¹² The sign transcribed *x* is 241 in the "Origin of Babylonian Writing." It has the meaning "favor." I have rendered it somewhat freely "prosperity."

¹³ *za* = *amêlu*, "Origin of Babylonian Writing," 523 and Delitzsch, *Sumerisches Glossar*, p. 218.

¹⁴ *gig-bi-ir*, literally "in their night."

The tablet is rather carelessly written. The scribe made a number of mistakes which he was compelled to correct by erasures. One would infer that the writing was that of a scribal apprentice rather than that of a skilled scribe.

The god Ashnan of this text is a god of vegetation. His name is written with the sign for grain plus the sign for forest. The prominent role which Ashnan plays in the text is proof that the agricultural interest was uppermost in the minds of the writers of the myth. The god Tikku is a personified river-bank. The statement made near the beginning, that he had not created the land, takes the reader back to the beginning of Babylonian civilization before the overflow of the rivers had been circumscribed by dykes.

The myth moves in the same circle of ideas as a portion of the text discovered by Dr. Langdon. According to my understanding of that text, irrigation of the earth was made possible by a marital union of the sun-god with the goddess Nintu.¹⁵ The tablet now discovered represents men generated by the lord and Nintu after they had been planned by Ug, the sun-god. This text presupposes the natural generation of men from a union of gods, as the other text does the natural generation of irrigation.

Our new text recognizes that food and sleep are provided by god but clothing and houses men had to invent. The description of the construction of a reed hut in line 22 of the obverse is true to the form of reed huts that may still be seen in the Babylonian marshes.

The lines on the reverse of the tablet are at the beginning broken. Apparently some god was addressing Enlil, because all had not gone well with men. Duazagga was the celestial abyss, the great abyss of the sky-vault. Here it is described as "the way of the gods," perhaps an allusion to the milky way, along which the gods were supposed to dwell. That men might have more direct help, a dwelling for Ashnan was made on the earth. Thereupon Ashnan created plants for food, and sent over the earth the various kinds of rain-clouds. This mitigated human misfortune only in part. Two thirds of the fold had perished before, but one third still perished. A god, possibly Eulil, accordingly came down and founded cities. These led to the formation of clans or kindreds; misfortune vanished, and

¹⁵ See the writer's "Archæology and the Bible," Philadelphia, 1916, p. 284.

men multiplied. This secure life led to dominion on the part of man, and to settled marriage.

The text discovered by Dr. Langdon described, according to my understanding of it, the beginnings of irrigation, agriculture, and the knowledge of medicinal plants; the new text has to do with the origin of man, the beginnings of agriculture, of city life, and of settled marriage.

Some of the statements in this text remind us, sometimes by their form, sometimes by their substance, of passages in the early chapters of Genesis. Thus: "The lord caused them to be and they came into existence" recalls Gen. 1:3: "And God said, Let there be light and there was light." The statement: "He brought to the hand of man the scepter of command," reminds the reader of the way in Gen. 1:28 God is said to have given man dominion over all other forms of animate life. "Companions calling them, a man with his wife he made them dwell," brings to mind the statement of Gen. 2:18 that it is not good for man to be alone, and of Gen. 2:24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife." The last line of the new tablet: "At night as fitting companions they are together" is the Babylonian equivalent of the last clause of Gen. 2:24: "And they shall be one flesh."

The text will be published with full grammatical commentary in a volume that the writer is preparing for the University Museum. which will be entitled "Miscellaneous Religious Texts."

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